

The Date of Easter: Although settled at Nicaea, it continued to be a point that irritated the eastern church and provoked a lot of argument behind the scenes.

Clerical Celibacy: This was a debate point in polity but was promoted with vigor in the west while essentially denied in the east. Both areas saw a lot of virtue in being celibate and the ideal of life was often associated with that. Leo I would require it in the western church (450 AD) although it took centuries to see it strictly enforced. Many churchmen were in agreement with the idea but the eastern church did not seek to enforce it at the parish level and no church council ever made it an ecumenical standard.

IV.2.e.
Spiritual
Issues

Spiritual Life Issues and Problems

These are always a bit hard to pin down. The earlier phases of our study showed the quick way in which the church moved to forms and legal strictures to bring spiritual life into a conforming level. A few of the issues that kept the pot boiling are summarized so:

Heretical Influence: It was everywhere and the manner of dealing with it was a continuing problem. The greatest disturbance came with regard to the work of Origen who, in so many ways, was a fine Christian scholar. But his ambiguity on many points allowed division and dissent. But seeking to limit the effects of heretics, et al, was difficult especially as some parts of the church were less willing to accept the definitions of other parts on the nature of a teaching or substance. General condemnations were the better tools of discipline but where a father had been dead for some time it was hard to make the condemnation stand on his total influence.

Hermeneutics: How to interpret the Bible constituted an interesting question. One's use and view of the Bible is conditioned by this and there was little love lost between literalists and allegorists. In general the literalists showed less orthodoxy than the allegorists and you might be surprised at some of their teaching. This was not the product of hermeneutics so much as a matter of other influences....I think!